243 only a few watchers are necessary. A pine
221 tree some 20 feet high is trimmed and set
674 firmly in the ground. The watchers climb this and spend hours standing uncomfortably in the crotches left by trimming the branches. Often several families may cooperate in watching, or several landowners may hire watchers, called *veladores*.

243 When the ears are well formed, but while
246 stalks and leaves are still green, fodder ("*rastrojo*") is cut. All stalks without ears, and the ear-bearing stalks above the ears, are cut, dried, carried to the house, and stored in sheds. This forms the principal fodder for animals. The stalks remaining in the field are not cut after the harvest, but animals are allowed to graze the harvested fields.

243 The main work of harvesting is done by men.
[462] Women bring food to the men, and they also glean, assisted by children. At harvest each man takes two rows at a time. The ears are picked, husked, and thrown in a round cane-
[482] splint burden basket (ǎundis) carried on the
[285] back with the aid of a tumpline. Ears which miss the basket belong to the gleaners, who also take the nubbins. When the basket is filled, the corn is piled at convenient spots.

243 The harvest is the busiest time of year.
484 Except for a few specialists, the sick, and the infirm, everyone works, either on his own har-
466 vest or as a laborer for someone else. Labor also comes from other towns. Wages are 40 to 50 centavos a day, plus the right to glean. Women and children follow the men of their own household and close supervision is necessary in order to prevent too many ears from being dropped or overlooked. The workday is about 7 hours. The larger landowners have tried unsuccessfully to eliminate gleaning by raising wages to 1 peso a day. Men refused to work without gleaning rights, despite the opinion of most objective observers that the maize secured from gleaning had less value than the additional wages. The landowners would have saved through eliminating supervisors. When the harvest is over, some farmers treat all their help to a few drinks of *aguardicnte* (čaránda).

243 Most of the harvest is carried to town and
492 the storehouses on burros. Nets are used to hold the ears. Sometimes other animals are
[493] used, and for some fields employment of two-wheeled oxcarts is possible, although they are rarely used.

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34

462 They may gather herbs, make embroidered women's garments or paper flowers for sale, do the marketing for the household, and also most of the selling. If a woman's husband hires out as a laborer during harvest time, she gleans behind him in the field. There is no strong feeling against a woman who in emergency helps at her husband's work; but women actually have very little spare time.

Most productive activity in the ordinary sense, then, is performed by men. Men do all farm work, look after animals for the most part, do all forestry, and make most of the manufactured articles that enter into commerce. Distant trade is also carried on by men, although they may be accompanied by their wives, and women may go to Paracho or even Uruapan to sell herbs, fruit, vegetables, bread, tamales, or other prepared foods.

463 The bulk of the population of Cherán falls into two overlapping classes, farmers and laborers. Only a small minority utilize all their labor on their own land; even smaller is the number of farmers who employ no labor. Farmers, furthermore, may be divided into landowners and tenant farmers.

Farmers may also be storekeepers, traders, forest workers, or artisans in their spare time. In addition, they may hire out as laborers when they have free time. Indeed, most laborers have land or at least a garden plot. The labor [464] supply of Cherán, in fact, is inadequate, and laborers are hired from neighboring villages, 465 especially Nahuatzen. The standard wages are 45 centavos a day, but harvest hands receive 50 centavos a day plus the right to have their wives and children glean behind them, apparently a not insignificant factor, as the proposal of several large landowners to raise the harvest wage to $1 a day and eliminate the gleaning privilege was rejected by the workmen. Variations in wages are discussed in connection with specific activities.

462 Bearing in mind that most men have some land, the list of occupations in Cherán is exten- 463 sive, as shown in the following tabulation:

PRODUCTIVE OCCUPATIONS

Men

Farming
Hired labor
Shoemaking (few)

1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[p.62]

463 Ritual dancing[1]
Sorcery
462

Women

Midwifery
Domestic service (rare)
Curing
School teaching (rare)
Minor church services[1]
Ritual dancing (pastorela only[1])
Sorcery

[1] Occupations without pay; some involving outlay of money to participate. Women's household duties are not listed. Elsewhere the distribution of women's time is discussed (p. 197).

565 Information from day laborers on the whole was unsatisfactory. Not only are they sensi-
464 tive about their position, but there is some condescension toward them on the part of landowners despite the lack of explicitly drawn class lines. When an older man jestingly suggested that one of our local assistants should get in practice to carry a harvest basket, the young man replied that he didn't intend to carry a harvest basket, or plow either. "That is what you have *peons* for," he said.

Information about day laborers indicated a
465 return of from 40 to 50 centavos a day, depending on season and labor. Some workers also do work by the job. Men employed to thresh wheat will sometimes get about 1½ centavos a liter. The most accurate-sounding informant, a man from Nahuatzen, estimated he could thresh 80 liters a day, a return of about $1.20 a day. This seems high, but one informant produced estimates which would have him earning $25 a day.[21]

Unemployment for laborers usually comes
464 about the same time as the slack season for farmers, January and July. Often workers will take a vacation in this period. The more energetic will seek work at this time—bring in building stones, work in the woods, try for odd jobs about town, bring in firewood for themselves or for sale, or fatten a pig for sale. One of the storekeepers evidently will pay $2.50 a
[465] dozen for building stones delivered at his store
[435] for later resale. Pine firewood can be sold usually at four sticks for 1 centavo, oak at three sticks for 1 centavo.

[21] In Angáhuan, Rendón found similar situations. Building fences pays 50 centavos a day without meals. Other field work, however, is never paid in money. Harvest workers receive three *medidas* of maize, and breakfast and dinner. Ox-team drivers receive two *medidas* of maize and meals.

Low as wages are, Rendón collected an account which indicates that wages were only 12 centavos a day within the lifetime of elderly men. The informant stated that he preferred to work at Nahuatzen because meals were included in the wage, which is not the case in Cherán. This requires verification, as Nahuatzen normally has a larger labor supply than Cherán.

In addition to paid labor or labor for one's own account, men are required to perform certain public services. These include maintenance of the aqueduct and improvement of roads and trails. Young men may also be required to do certain work in connection with fiestas, particularly the fiesta of the patron saint and the Day of the Dead. There is also obligatory assistance of relatives in connection with ceremonials and house moving. These requirements are dealt with later.

No data were secured on the relation between labor demand and labor supply. As indicated by the presence of labor from other towns at some seasons, it is believed that at peak periods there is an undersupply of labor in the town. Much of the year, however, there probably is a labor surplus in the sense that many farmers often have time free which they could use in some other employment were it readily available.

CAPITAL

Efforts to define capital for Cherán meet with the same difficulties that are to be met with in our own society. Money used for purchasing food ordinarily is not considered capital; yet insofar as it makes the individual capable of producing additional goods or services through which his wealth is increased, such money, or stores of food accumulated for this purpose, might be considered capital. Money accumulated to buy land for the production of food for sale or export would usually be considered capital; is the land purchased to be so considered also? In the case of Cherán, I think it is, for, although most farmers would not so regard it, a considerable number of Cherán men have bought land for the express purpose of increasing wealth, not through their own efforts, but through those of a tenant farmer.

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
[P.156] NU34 Tarasco NU34
Pátzcuaro

up to the Mexican Revolution of 1910. This found its legal expression in the *Reforma* and subsequent laws aimed at suppressing communal property. The change, however, went at a different pace in different regions. Mexico, due to the diversity of its territory and population, is characterized by a very unequal development of its various regions, thus allowing different types of society and culture to live together even if connected and coordinated into a single nation. The political and legal changes of the late nineteenth century represent only the turning point at which this general trend of change became the dominant political issue and required expression in the nation's legal system.

In marginal regions, however, the landholding village, regardless of how many changes in its organization were required, survived and held its own against the haciendas, in the same way as haciendas had been the dominant type of economy in parts of Mexico at the time when communal ownership of villages was recognized and protected by law. Consequently, in discussing the development of a particular region like Michoacan, further inquiry is essential to determine to what extent and in what manner this national trend of change has taken place.

* * *

Private estates had been introduced into Michoacan by the Spaniards since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They began in northern Michoacan where the land was particularly suited for stock raising, and in the tierra caliente where they concentrated on cattle and sugar cane. This is the area where the hacienda type of economy predominated until the Revolution.

Information is available on the political-religious organization of Indian towns at the end of the eighteenth century (from around 1789) and will be discussed later (Chapter 3). In the economic scene, the impact of the haciendas on the holding villages was at that time already noticeable. Some of the haciendas, like La Guaracha in the Zamora area and those on the southern shore of Lake Pátzcuaro, which after the Revolution were subject to land reforms and which are today on the edge of Tarascan-speaking territory, were already in existence.

The villages in the northern and southern areas had to supplement their native economy with work in neighboring haciendas. This seems to have been the main factor leading to the decline and final disappear-

175 ance of native speech in those areas, a pro-
464 cess which began in the late eighteenth
177 century and was greatly accelerated after Independence.

In central Michoacan, the Sierra and the
175 Lake areas (except the southern shore),
438 the land-holding villages predominated and were devoted mainly to agriculture and handicrafts.[24]

175 During the Profirio Díaz period, the ap-
668 plication of the Reforma Laws abolishing
423 communal property, and the economic development of the country brought about further growth of the haciendas.

In Tzintzuntzan, the formerly communal lands were distributed among the villagers, and individual titles had been given by 1885. Between 1885 and 1902, a large part of the best agricultural land and most of the communal, non-agricultural lands were sold, legally or otherwise, to outsiders who, with these lands, established haciendas.[25]

[311] In the swamp of Zacapu, a company was formed at the end of the century in order to reclaim swamp land. Thus, several haciendas were established in a swamp, which had been the property of the neighboring Indian towns. At least one of these haciendas seems to have managed to acquire further land from the village of Tarejero.[26]

175 In many towns, however, the Indians re-
423 sisted the operation of the Reforma laws during most of the nineteenth century.

In 1902, the state legislature passed a law
648 regarding the distribution of the property
656 of extinct Indian communities (*Ley y reglamento sobre reparto de bienes de las extinguidas communidades indígenas*, 18 de junio y 4 de julio 1902). It provided that the formerly communal land of the Indians could not be sold or mortgaged; that in order to distribute the land every town should appoint two representatives; that in case the state government did not approve of the town's choice of representatives it should appoint attorneys (*apoderados*); that the towns should entrust their land titles to the authorities; and that if the towns did not appoint representatives after a certain period of time the government would name the attorneys. In most cases it was the government which appointed the attorneys.

This procedure apparently was intended to keep the lands from being sold to non-Indians, but although the land of the villages was not sold outright, it was leased

24. West, 1948, 11-18.
25. Foster, 1948, 171-2.
26. Simpson, 1937, 484-6.

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
[P. 179] NU34 Tarasco NU34
Pátzcuaro

175 423 others being landless. This condition seems to have been present even at the time when land was owned by the village, wherever private property existed within the community. When private ownership became general at the end of the nineteenth century, the differentiation as to wealth within the villages undoubtedly increased.

Although no detailed statistics are available for the Tarascan area, the existing information shows that inequality in landed property within the villages was prevalent, although in different degrees, in the various Tarascan villages. It has been reported for the Cañada villages,[30] Urapicho,[31] Cherán,[32] Tzintzuntzan,[33] Paracho, Charapan and Jarácuaro[34] either for pre-revolutionary or modern times.

The range in inequality is perhaps less in some small Cañada villages, which have preserved as communal holding the agricultural lands of the community.[35] In a large agricultural town like Cherán, where laborers come to work in harvest time from neighboring towns,[36] the differences are considerable. A great number of larger landowners rent part of their lands on a share crop basis to other villagers, and there are some completely landless men.[37]

[609] Many Tarascan villages discourage the selling of land to outsiders, the approval of the town being necessary for such transactions.[38] The increased inequality seems to have been greater in those places where selling to strangers took place. At the advent of the Revolution, this was the case in some Cañada villages where the largest landholders were mestizos from neighboring towns.[39]

[796] [426] The custom by which individuals take care of financing a given religious festival also led some villagers to sell or pawn and later lose their lands. Such was the case in Urapicho before the Revolution.[40] In La Cañada this was not only a factor in hastening the loss of lands but also the way by which outsiders got hold of them, for the Indians pawned their lands to moneylenders in mestizo towns.[41]

175 423 464 In all towns where there are landless people, the latter go out to work in neighboring towns or farms, for instance Nahua-

30. Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 291; Sáenz, 1936, 255-6.
31. Beals, 1946, 131.
32. *Ibid.*, 13, 61-2, 66, 98-9.
33. Foster, 1948, 71-2, 173-5.
34. Field notes.
35. West, 1948, 32-3.
36. Beals, 1946, 61.
37. *Ibid.*, 99.
38. West, 1948, 32.
39. Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 291; Sáenz, 1936, 255-6.
40. Beals, 1946, 131.
41. Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 291; Sáenz, 1936, 255-6.

2;Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
[P. 176] NU34 Tarasco NU34
Pátzcuaro

175 tzen[42] and Jarácuaro. This was particu-
423 larly the case in towns near haciendas to
464 which they had lost their lands, as, for instance, in the villages on the southern shore of Lake Pátzcuaro. Work in those haciendas was essential to the livelihood of the villages.[43]

175 These differences in wealth within the
621 villages were responsible for the splitting of the villages into opposite parties in re-
578 lation to the conflicts unleashed by the Revolution, which will be described below. No matter how violent this conflict became at times, it should always be kept in mind that these disrupting factors were never more than a tendency. The concentration of property was not large enough to lead to the formation of haciendas, and the village as a functioning economic unit was not destroyed. There are other factors, relating to land tenure and agricultural methods, to which can be ascribed the basic conservatism of the villages which still keeps the community together.

Practically every village has some communal lands left. Permanent agricultural
423 lands are still communal in only five of the ten Cañada villages. There, title to the land is held by the town, but within the town private property prevails, and land can be inherited and sold among villagers.[44] Some other towns have, besides the individually owned lands, communal croplands which are worked in common, usually by the landless farmers, their produce going in part to the workers, in part to the town.[45] Forest land is communal everywhere, and all villagers have the right to gather wood or to farm temporary clear-
[651] ings. Only recently (in the 1930's), have the Federal Forest Laws required the payment of a tax and securing of a permit for those activities.[46]

621 Although cultivated lands are privately
241 owned the agricultural technique demands the cooperation of the whole community.
311 Beals thus describes this system in Cherán:

"The so-called 'plains' consist of several large areas, subdivided in numerous privately owned plots. Maize and wheat are the principal crops grown. The 'plains' are cultivated in alternate years under supervision of the town government. Harvest dates are fixed by the town council; after the final date, the 'plains' become community pasture. Fencing of individual plots is not permitted, nor is planting in consecutive

42. Beals, 1946, 61.
43. León, 1934, 155.
44. West, 1948, 32-33.
45. Loc. cit.
46. West, 1948, 33; Beals, 1946, 21, 59, 60; Mendieta y Núñez, 1940, 279; Foster, 1948, 176-1.

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
[P. 18b] NU34 Tarasco NU34
Pátzcuaro

241 goes on because, as Beals says, "The
433 Cherán point of view does not reckon agricultural activity in terms of interest, profits and wages, but in terms of maize in the storage houses."[52]

Monzón,[53] in discussing the Indian prob-
464 lem of Mexico from the point of view of Western civilization, considers the Indians together with the unemployed as a labor reserve, only occasionally put to use. If one views the situation from the point of view of the Western economic system and considers the fact that farming is done at a loss, the great importance of emigration,[54]
[167] and the enormous response of labor during the war when laborers *(braceros)* were contracted to work in the United States, one wonders if the basic factor preserving the self-centered Indian villages and their folk culture is the strength of these, or rather the inability of the Western economic system to absorb those people whom the disruptive tendencies created by this system throw out to the labor market.

438 Handicrafts are very important to the economy of many Tarascan villages, and
178 changes have to be examined in this field.

Throughout the Colonial and Independence periods, many changes took place in industries and their location. These changes have been described by West.[55] Of interest to our subject are changes as related to the disruptive and conservative tendencies within the villages. The development of modern industry in Mexico and the concomitant higher economic activity have caused, on the one hand, the decline or disappearance of some handicrafts which can not compete with industrial products, and, on the other hand, the further development of handicrafts which have found a better market and no competition.

178 Among the declining industries, the most important are textile handicrafts.
286 Spinning and weaving of white cotton cloth, which was the most important fabric made, have completely disappeared.[56] Women's skirts are increasingly made from factory-manufactured woolens instead of the local hand-made cloth,[57] and industrial cotton or woolen blankets *(tilma, poncho)*
463 are cheaper than the locally made serape,
178 and are frequently used even if the latter are preferred. Ironwork is another extinct craft,[58] leather work has greatly declined,[59]

52. Beals, 1946, 65.
53. Monzón, 1947, 327.
54. Beals, 1946, 98.
55. West, 1948, 56-71.
56. *Ibid.*, 64.
57. *Ibid.*, 65.
58. *Ibid.*, 70-71.
59. *Ibid.*, 69.

177 nonmaterial elements with European; but by per-
797 forming religious functions in Tarascan, they
191 helped to preserve, rather than destroy, the native tongue. Nor did the absentee *encomen-*
[651] *dero*, who held villages in fee in order to collect monthly or yearly tribute, disturb the native speech.

177 The permanent European settlements (mines,
191 farming, and livestock enterprises) which de-
464 manded indigenous labor were the more important
167 agents in substituting Spanish for the native
566 language. *Repartimiento* labor from northern Tarasca was sent to the large silver mines in the east (Tlalpujahua, Sultepec, Temascaltepec, Zacualpan, Taxco) and in the north (Guanajuato); few pueblos in the Sierra furnished workers for these mines.[21] Such labor worked in the mines only for 1- or 2-week periods, and although the workers probably picked up some Spanish in contact with mulattoes and mestizos, they continued to use their native tongue. Free Tarascan laborers, however, migrated from their villages to distant northern mines (Zacatecas, Parral, San Luis Potosí) where they permanenty settled in native quarters and eventually lost the use of their aboriginal language.

191 Spanish settlements within the Tarascan area
177 contributed more than any other factor to the loss of the native tongue. Such settlement occurred during the 16th and 17th centuries in those lands peripheral to the Sierra, i. e., in the grassy plains and hill country to the north and east and in the *tierras templada* and *caliente* to the south. In both areas the basis of permanent Spanish settlement was stock raising. The northern section from the Otomí country near the Sierra de Ozumatlán to Mazamitla, south of Lake Chapala, was especially favorable for cattle and sheep. Large expanses of grass and scrub existed between widely scattered native villages; numerous springs and streams afforded sufficient water; while salt licks were common near mineral springs and in small *playas*. Moreover, year-round pasture occurred along the margins of lakes and marshes throughout the northern region. During the colonial period thousands of sheep and cattle were pastured in the dry season around Lake Cuitzeo, around the margins of the *ciénaga* of Zacapu, and in the

[21] Aranza, Sevina, and Tzintzuntzan were the Sierra and Lake pueblos that supplied most of the *repartimiento* mine labor from the central part of the Tarascan area during the 16th century. During the 18th and 19th centuries most of the men of Zacán worked voluntarily in the Guanajuato mines. (Zavala and Castello, 1939–46, vol. 4, pp. 426–427; vol. 6, p. 468; AGN Historia, vol. 73, f. 356).

177 Lerma delta plain at the eastern end of Lake
191 Chapala.[22]

In the north, land was granted and cattle *estancias* were established soon after the voluntary submission of the Tarascan chiefs in 1522. By 1540 most of the best pastures between Lake Cuitzeo and Lake Chapala were in the hands of Spanish ranchers (Paso y Troncoso, 1905, vol. 1, pp. 76, 77, 117, etc.), and by 1600 most of northern Tarasca was taken up by cattle and sheep ranches, forming the southern part of the great colonial ranching area of north-central Mexico. In well-watered spots Spaniards also established
[464] irrigated wheat farms, worked by *repartimiento* labor from Tarascan villages nearby, e. g. around Chilchota and Indaparapeo (Mus. Nac., leg. 102, Rel. de Chilchota, 1581; Paso y Troncoso, 1905, vol. 1, pp. 78, 133).

These Spanish settlements, located between
[166] Indian pueblos, were centers of aculturation for natives who came to work permanently as herdsmen or farmers. Associating with mulatto and Negro cattle hands (who became numerous in Michoacán during the 17th and 18th centuries), Indians gradually lost their Tarascan speech and intermarried with the invading element, begetting mixed offspring. Spanish and mulatto families also established households in many reorganized Indian pueblos (e. g. Cuitzeo, Indaparapeo, Chilchota, etc.), the Indian population being relegated to *barrios*, or native quarters in the town. There, too, aculturation took place. Furthermore, at least two Spanish towns were founded in the northern area—Valladolid (More-
[166] lia) and Zamora—in both of which were established *barrios* for Indians who came to live as laborers and traders.

In spite of active Spanish and mulatto settlement in the North, the loss of native speech was slow. By the mid-18th century Tarascan-speaking folk comprised between 50 and 75 percent of the total population in the northern plateau of Michoacán, and many pueblos were still entirely native in speech [23] (map 8). These percentages

[22] The pastures of the lower Lerma were famed throughout New Spain for their abundant winter forage. During the 16th and 17th centuries thousands of sheep were annually driven there from Querétaro, Toluca, the Valley of Mexico, and other distant places. (Mus. Nac. (Col. Gómez Orozco), Rel. de Querétaro; Ponce Relación, 1572, vol. 2, p. 14; Arregui, 1946, p. 60.)

[23] The language maps (8 and 9) were compiled chiefly from church *padrones*,
[127] or lists of confessors of each inhabited place in the diocese of Michoacán. Such lists are extant in the Archivo del Arzobispado de Michoacán (AAM), Morelia. *Padrones* for 1742, 1746, and 1780, plus population and linguistic information from Villaseñor y Sánchez: Theatro Americano, 1746–48, were employed to construct the map for 1750. For that of 1800 the writer used *padrones* for 1798, 1800, 1801, 1805, 1806, and 1810. Information for the latter map was much less complete than for the former.

563 177 191 rounded by Tarascans. A few Spanish ranchers and traders settled also in Tingüindín, a large Indian village at the western edge of the Sierra; but the extreme western Tarascan zone from Mazamitla to Los Reyes did not completely lose its native speech until the beginning of the present century.

The tierra caliente and tierra templada.—The story of the recession of Tarascan speech in the *tierra caliente* roughly parallels that in the northern plateau. In the former area disease probably [164] decimated the native population more completely than in the north, and its Europeanization was consequently more rapid. After the period of gold panning in the southern tributaries of the Tepalcatepec and Balsas Rivers, the Spaniards turned to cattle ranching in the tropical bush around Cutzamala, Pungarabato, and Huetamo in the Balsas Basin and near Apatzingán and Tomatlán in the Tepalcatepec lowland. Although the tropical grasses and shrubs were less nourishing than those in the northern plateau, the *tierra caliente* was favored by abundant springs and streams. As in the north, the natives rapidly became *vaqueros* and mixed with the mulattoes and Negroes on the ranches. Moreover, during the last decades of the 16th century Spaniards began to establish sugar plantations and mills in the upper limits of the *tierra caliente*.[35] The mill settlements (*trapiches*, *ingenios*), like the cattle ranches, were centers of acculturation and miscegenation. Large groups of Negro and mulatto slaves, male and female, were imported to operate the *trapiches* (according to colonial law, Indians were exempt from mill labor), while Tarascan [464] forced and free workers planted and harvested cane in fields nearby. Race mixing and gradual loss of native speech was inevitable. Again, exploitation of the copper mines of the *tierra caliente* 191 and the establishment of smelting centers in [177] Tzatzio and Santa Clara was another activity which helped acculturation and hastened the loss of the aboriginal language. In 1750 the limits of Tarascan speech still coincided with the 16th century pre-Spanish boundaries, but in some areas, such as the Tepalcatepec Basin, the percentage of inhabitants speaking Tarascan was only 25 percent of the total. In the *tierra templada* sugar-growing districts south of Zitácuaro, in the Peribán Valley, and the upper escarpment zone around Ario and Tacámbaro, the ratio of

[35] In 1540 a sugar mill had been established in Taximaroa, on the plateau above Tuxpan (Paso y Troncoso, 1905, vol. 1, p. 203).

[Text continues TOP of P. 172---Analyst]

314 picked up by trucks from turpentine distilleries in Uruapan and Morelia. Charcoal is a minor commercial forest product made by Tarascans living near mestizo towns. The latter comprise [312] the principal markets for charcoal, which has never entered Tarascan culture.[119] Other minor forest products consist of *ocote* splinters, used for primitive interior illumination;[120] softwoods 313 (madroño, jaboncillo, aile, etc.) for lathe work; pine and fir for cabinet work; etc.

Within the last 50 years the commercial sawmill has penetrated into the Sierra. Lumber companies purchase cutting rights of standing timber from the pueblos and set up a steam- or (when near a power line) electric-powered saw in the midst of the forest.[121] When the suitable timber has been depleted (under Federal inspection), the mill closes down, and the remnant of the forest reverts to the pueblo. Although most [464] companies bring in mestizo labor, many Tarascans from villages nearby obtain seasonal work in the sawmills, thereby supplementing their usually low income. Because of their ephemeral character, the number of mills in the area varies. In 1940 there were five mills in the Sierra proper; in 1946 the number had decreased to three.

During the last 100 years cutting has exceeded natural timber growth in the Sierra. Clearing of new plowland to sustain increased population and commercial lumbering have been the major factors of forest depletion. Moreover, disease has recently destroyed acres of pine in the vicinity of Tarecuato, and volcanic ash has laid waste the forest within a 3-mile radius of Paricutin. Lumbering even by the Tarascan woodsmen is often wasteful. Large trees are sometimes cut and left unattended for years until rot renders the wood useless.[122] Improper tapping for resin and testing for shakes often kill many trees. The sawmills, operating on a much larger scale than the native lumbermen, are even more destructive, and in former years they depleted large sections of Sierra forest. Approximately 50 years ago the timberland in the eastern part of the Sierra east

[119] The main charcoal-producing towns in the area are San Lorenzo (Uruapan market), Opopeo and Cuanajo (Pátzcuaro market).

[120] The *rancheros* around Pamatácuaro gather much ocote, which the women market in the large mestizo towns bordering the Sierra.

[121] In 1944 the pueblo of San Felipe sold its forest to an Uruapan company for two million pesos. The proceeds were deposited in an Uruapan bank, where they remain communal property.

[122] Such wasteful exploitation was much in evidence in the forest lands of Pamatácuaro on the southern slope of Cerro de Patamban.